

# THE COLONIAL NEWSLETTER

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On the advice of our supporters we have established subscriptions for this pamphlet. The present rate is \$5 per year, but will be reduced when possible. Those who contribute articles will receive the newsletter free and we hope to figure out some way to make an adjustment to those who have generously contributed both money and articles in the past.

Due to the relative costs and potential increase in circulation, the plates now used will be photo engraved. I hope the quality will be acceptable.

We are continually in need of articles and write-ups. Your comments are always welcome.

A. D. Hoch, *Editor*

## LETTERS

I see that I have mislabeled one of the pictures on the plate in the January issue of *The Colonial Newsletter*. The upper left coin captioned "Ryder No. 12(M)" should be "Ryder No. 12(O)". While 12-M is a known variety, the 12(O) designation is more accurate here since this photograph shows the obverse found with the Reverse "O" pictured below it.

W. P. Keller

## NEW LISTING OF CONNECTICUT COPPERS NOW AVAILABLE

It was good to read in the last *Newsletter* that memorandum from Richard Picker pointing out five different die combinations that were omitted from "State Coinage of Connecticut", as well as another variety that was erroneously described by H. C. Miller. Examples of all these varieties may be seen at ANS, except 33(21)-EE of 1787. The latter, together with 33(21)-k(4), were originally described in J. M. Richardson's article, "Varieties of Connecticut Cents", which was published in "Numismatic Review", Vol. 3 (1946), P. 5. Unfortunately the illustrations of these two combinations on Plate I were transposed, so halftone No. 2 should be No. 3 and vice versa.

Since 1920 there have been many more changes to Miller than Picker's memo indicated. Other new combinations have been discovered in the intervening years, and several more have been disapproved, as for example the unique 8-0(1) of 1786. It now appears that this obv. 8 with its curious legend, UCTORI: CONNNEC:, is simply a double striking of obv. 5(4). The unique discovery specimen of obv. 8 was illustrated on the Miller plate, but the present whereabouts of the coin is unknown. In spite of published information, the current edition of "Guidebook of United States Coins" has added Miller's same halftone to Yeoman's well known catalogue, and priced the only example of this doublestrike at \$8.00 in Good, and \$19.00 in Fine condition!

In the forty years that have elapsed since Miller, it is quite significant to note that there are only two dies which remain unedited. The one is rev. Z(25) of 1787 which we hope will be described and illustrated in the next issue of *Newsletter*. The other is rev. C of 1786, which is known from only a single combination, 4(1)-C. Concerning it, Miller wrote, "Mr. Crosby gives this combination, but no specimen of it has been located." Fortunately, W. H. Breen has verified the existence of this variety and made pencil rubbings of it, but its present location is likewise unrecorded. His original manuscript description of unpublished rev. C of 1786 is as follows:

"Branch is distinctive, all upper leaves disconnected, others practically so. Note fold of drapery over shield. Some parallels of latitude extend down to the denticles. Letter B touches the shield; colon and date very close."

The writer has recently finished a revised list of all known varieties of Connecticut coppers in an attempt to incorporate those various and sundry discoveries that have accumulated in the series since Miller. In this new listing are included the pieces muled by two Connecticut re-

verses of 1788 with different obverses of British Type Halfpence, — thus following the pattern set by Hillyer Ryder when he included two similar mules in his Vermont series; i.e., the George III obverse, R. 31, and the Britannia reverse, R. 13. The two Connecticut mules, identified as 100-I and 101-D, are, of course, part of the Machin's Mills series formerly known by the common name of "Tory Cents". Both of these varieties were carefully described by Crosby in "Early Coins of America", p. 192, but no further identification was assigned them for future reference. Miller omitted even mentioning these pieces, as likewise did Canfield and Ryder in their "Additions and Corrections". Why they did so is a mystery.

The said list is now ready for gratis distribution to any specialists who would like a copy. It is printed on six pages, with the 335 combinations arranged first in numerical sequence by obverse, then repeated in alphabetical order by reverse. There is absolutely no obligation in asking for a free copy. The only request is that each recipient notify the writer of any factual additions, deletions or changes in order to bring future editions up to date.

Edward R. Barnsley  
Newtown, Pa.

#### REDISCOVERY OF THE 1796 WASHINGTON PRESIDENT PIECE

By GEORGE J. FULD, Baltimore, Md., and  
ERIC P. NEWMAN, St. Louis, Mo.

The authors have for a number of years been compiling information for a monograph on the eighteenth century coinage with Washington's portrait. The only available comprehensive listing of these pieces since Crosby, is included in W. S. Baker's "Medallic Portraits of Washington", published in 1885. Baker lists 36 different pieces of this category with several others being mentioned in footnotes. At present, over eighty different die combinations of the early Washington pieces are known. We previously had been able to trace all except two of Baker's listings, Nos. 33 and 36. This article deals with the rediscovery of the problematical and strange piece known as Baker 33.

Baker 33 was first listed by J. R. Snowden in "Medallic Memorials of Washington in the Mint of the United States", published in 1861. It is illustrated there as No. 43 on Plate XI. At the time Snowden stated it "was presented by H. Drumheller,

of Schuylkill Co., Pa., and is believed to be unique". When Baker, in the course of research for his book, contacted the Mint he discovered that the piece had only been loaned to the mint by Mr. Drumheller, and had been included in the Mint collection by error. Apparently, Baker had been unable to locate this specimen and it has remained unknown and obscure until the summer of 1960.

Fortunately, a midwestern dealer obtained the coin in a collection and permitted it to be examined in detail. This piece is one of the most unusual Washington pieces extant, and the actual intent of its issue can only be surmised. The obverse strikingly resembles the 1792 Washington President I half dollar by Getz. The reverse is from the same reverse die as the 1792 half dollar. It is identical to the piece illustrated in Snowden, as evidenced by the location of the hole in the planchet. It is illustrated herein.

A detailed description of the piece follows:

*Obverse:* Bust of Washington facing left cut into the die with the same punch as the 1792 Washington President I pieces (Baker 24 and 25). Legend not fully clear as it is either G. WASHINGTON PRESIDENT. 1796 or WASHINGTON PRESIDENT. 1796. The letter punches differ from those used on the 1792 Washington President I dies. A circle of dots, 1.9/32" in diameter were punched into coin after striking. Radial grooves of of varying lengths cut by hand (after striking) outward from the circle of dots, leaving scalloped outline near edge. Radials in 18 groups of about 9 each.

*Reverse:* The reverse is the identical die used on the 1792 Washington President I piece, with 15 stars, 15 leaves, 2 claws and 6 arrows. There is a heavy dent in the center of the shield. As on the obverse, there are radials, cut by hand (after striking) inward from the edge towards the lettering. Radials are in 27 groups of about 6 each. The A of STATES is badly broken or rusted and is nearly perfect on all 1792 pieces observed.

*Edge:* Rectangles show around the edge, identical to those used on Spanish colonial eight reale pieces of the late 18th century, indicating it was an overstrike made after the faces had been smoothed.

The coin is in silver, weighing 361 grains, with a specific gravity of 10.5 and

a diameter of 24/16ths of an inch. It was struck so that the reverse is 185 degrees off of the obverse. Unfortunately the condition of the obverse is only fair, while the reverse is fine.

What is this strange piece, struck on a foreign coin flan, with an unusual date, and with considerable hand tooling after the piece was struck? For comparative purposes, we have shown below a specimen of the 1792 Washington President I half dollar (Baker 24), this specimen being a rare ornamented edge variety from the collection of Mrs. R. Henry Norweb. Also, a photograph of the 1797 Masonic medal (Baker 288), attributed to Peter Getz is shown, the specimen illustrated being the Garrett piece in the collection of the Johns Hopkins University, and shown through the courtesy of Dr. S. D. Freeman, curator.

First, a few words as to the origin of the 1792 President I Half Dollar. Walter Breen, in "The United States Patterns of 1792" (*Coin Collectors Journal*, 21 (2) 1954). In this pamphlet Breen gives a very sound basis for classifying the 1792 President I pieces as 1792 pattern coinage for the U.S., but issued only on a semi-official basis. A few of Breen's points should be emphasized. Although Breen knows of no basis for attributing these pieces to Getz, he follows the tradition established by Dickeson, Crosby and others in assigning these pieces to Getz. By sheer luck, one of the authors was fortunate in obtaining an excerpt from a Philadelphia newspaper of 1843 which discussed the Washington so-called colonial coinage. The article by Jonas R. McClintock, a former mint official, who was associated with the first U.S. mint, stated that the 1792 'patterns' were cut by a young artisan from Lancaster. This is the only contemporary evidence located which discusses the Washington coinage, and there can be no doubt that the person referred to is Peter Getz of Lancaster. For once, it appears that one numismatic tradition is borne out by the facts. However, since the article by McClintock erroneously states that the 1791 large eagle cent was made in Philadelphia, it may have been the origin of the same erroneous conclusion as to the 1791 cent as repeated by Snowden, Prime, Cogan, Mickley and Crosby. It appears quite likely that some of the Getz pieces were struck at different times, perhaps late in 1791, while others were struck in early

1792. This may well account for the difference between the large flan and the small flan copper pieces.

However, there is new evidence since the publication of Breen's pamphlet that the 1792 Getz pieces were struck as late as 1795. For years, a puzzling listing in the Newcomer collection inventory, compiled by B. Max Mehl, had a piece described as a 1792 President I piece "struck on a one cent planchet. Lettering cut into obverse and reverse. Diam. 30 mm. Extremely rare or unique. Very good". The piece was priced at \$46. This piece was recently acquired by another midwestern coin dealer, and proved to be a 1792 Getz copper struck on a 1795 U.S. cent planchet. So obviously at least one 1792 Getz piece was struck after its dating. The fact that this is on a U.S. large cent flan, presumably only available at the mint might strengthen the conclusion that the Getz pieces were of a semi-official pattern nature, such as the Birch cents, and that possibly the dies were still in the mint in 1795.

Now why was the 1796 piece, here described, struck on an 8 reale planchet? First, let us examine the 1797 Washington Masonic medal, known as Baker 288. This piece is extremely similar to the obverse of the 1792 Getz piece and in J. F. L. Th. Merzdorf's "Die Denkmünzen der Freimurer-Bruderschaft" published in 1851, the 1797 piece was attributed to Pennsylvania. This is further borne out by the fact that the inscription on the reverse of the piece, W. G. G. M., undoubtedly means "Washington General Grand Master". The Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania elected Washington as General Grand Master of Masons of the United States in 1780, but this did not meet with favor with other lodges in the United States, and the post was never officially created. Baker states that Getz was a member of the Masonic Order, and was sufficiently skilled to execute the intricate reverse die. Several obverse shells of the 1797 medal have been found attached to snuff boxes, and these boxes all had their origin in the Lancaster area.

Thus, it is the hypothesis of the present authors that the 1796 silver medal was a development piece, struck by Getz, for his personal use, in the evolution of the 1797 Masonic medal. In addition, the size of the 1792 and 1797 pieces are the same, and the 1796 piece shows that this die was

also of similar size. From the poor condition of the 1796 piece, and the hole at the top of the obverse, it is very likely that Getz himself used this piece as an ornament or watch fob.

Is this piece properly a coin or a medal? We feel that there can be no conclusion other than to call this piece a medal. First, there has always been general agreement that the Baker 288 piece, dated 1797 is a medal. Next, since the mint started to manufacture coins in 1793, any piece issued after that period cannot properly be classified as coins. The majority of the so-called Washington coins were struck in England, and all of the 1791, 1792, 1793 and 1795 pieces, with the exception of the 1792 Getz piece, are so closely related to the English token coinage of the 18th century (the so-called 'Conder' tokens) that there can be no sharp division drawn between them. In addition, the 1783 draped and military bust of Washington cents were struck in England between 1810 and 1820. Definite proof of this fact will be presented in our forthcoming monograph on early Washington coinage. Thus, the only Washington coins that are truly American coins in the strict sense of the word, are the Non Vi Virtute Vici coppers, the shield and Confederatio mulings, as well as the pieces dated 1791 and 1792. Even Baker attributed the General of the Armies pieces (one dated 1792, the other undated, Baker 60 and 59 respectively) as medals, and did not include these pieces in the coinage series. Also, many of the early U.S. coin auction catalogs categorized these as medals.

However, Washington pieces, even those of subsequent origin to their dating, are all collected as American colonial pieces. There has been almost no attempt to attribute the Washington coins by variety, particularly the many varieties of the 1783 'cents'. While there are numerous publications on the die varieties of other series, a detailed study of the Washington coinage has not yet been attempted. We sincerely hope to remedy this in the near future.

#### THE MUTTONHEADS

Most of us will recognize the characterized "Muttonhead", or "Bradford Head", as that Connecticut variety known and classified by Miller as the 1(2)-C. The obverse of this particular coin is also known to have an extremely weak legend, but

with the face usually, clearly outlined. However, and this is important, another die state of this variety is also in existence, and is much rarer. This condition has the legend well struck, but the area between the eyes and the top of the mail is bulged, thus obliterating this portion of the face. This is the earlier die state. The outline of the face has been later strengthened to probably make a more presentable coin.

The known reverse, designated as the "C", has the legend INDE and ET separated by a large period on the left, and LIB on the right. There is no need to further discuss this known reverse at this point. A new reverse has joined the fold of the Connecticut varieties, and has been newly christened as an "mm" reverse.

The overall central hub is similar in appearance, however, the legend has the INDE on the left, and the ET and LIB on the right separated by a large ornament, probably intending to be some sort of rosette. In all probability, there is also an ornament after the INDE to fill up the space between the E and the head, but unfortunately this specimen will not reveal this to be a fact.

Many indications show this coin to be some sort of a die trial. The obverse has been properly struck which is indicated by the lettering and the mail, but the reverse has only the 1 and the 7 properly sunk along with the first I. The rest of the coin has practically no relief. The size of the letters and the numerals of the "mm" reverse are the same as the "C" reverse. The reverse of the "C" is also better balanced in spacing and proportion, thus accounting for the possibility of the "mm" reverse being discarded.

To my knowledge, this specimen is unique. If there is another example known to anyone, I would appreciate knowing of it so that a more precise description regarding this new discovery can be presented to collectors.

My thanks to Ned Barnsley for corroborating this specimen, the new 1(2)-mm.

Robert A. Vlack  
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#### LOST AND FOUND?

While incorporating two items mentioned in the *Colonial Newsletter* into my Massachusetts coinage notes it occurred to

me that I may have found the missing 1788 Cents, 5-H and 12-H.

The items: (1) The reporting in the October, 1960, issue of the "4"-I Cent which combines a 1787 obverse with a 1788 reverse; and (2) Walter Breen's mention in the January, 1961, issue of the present day failure to locate the 5-H and 12-H Cents of 1788.

I suggest that:

- (1) Obverse No. 5 of 1788 is the same as Obverse No. 4 of 1787;
- (2) The 1788 reverses "H" and "I" are the same;
- (3) The 1787-1788 "4"-I Cent was known to Crosby and Ryder as 5-H.
- (4) The 1788 Cents 12-H and 12-I are the same.

The descriptions given in both Crosby and Ryder for the 1788 Obverse No. 5 and the 1787 Obverse No. 4 are alike in every detail. Likewise, the description of the 1788 Reverses "H" and "I" are the same except for *one* detail—the number of arrows. I believe that the total of 10 given for Reverse "H" may have included the unbarbed arrows in addition to the barbed ones. Choice specimens of Reverse "I" are found to have 6 barbed arrows and 5 unbarbed, however only 4 unbarbed appear on average pieces since one is very light. It could be that Crosby or whoever reported Reverse "H" counted both the barbed and unbarbed arrows as had been done with the 1787 reverses.

If the above is so, then one can deduce that "4"-I and 5-H are the same, and a more proper designation for the "4"-I coins reported in the October issue would be 5-I. The 12-H Cent would also be replaced by the present 12-I.

In addition, it is interesting to note the rarity rating of 5-H is given as R6 which agrees well with today's census of three known 5-I ("4"-I) Cents. This is not entirely satisfactory when one compares the assigned rarities of 12-H (R-1) with 12-I (R5).

The combining of the above die designations should reduce the known Callender die total to 42 which is the sum of new (39) and repaired (3) dies reported by

Crosby (page 252) to have been made by Joseph Callender. Whether this is of significance I cannot fathom.

Have the lost been found? What is your opinion?

W. P. Keller

#### NEW FUGIO VARIETY

A new Fugio cent combination with obverse 17 has been discovered. The die is very similar to reverse I, showing a strong impression of an obverse, incuse on the coin. Major die damage exists through the 6th and 7th links. Tops of WE inline and very close. ARE is evenly spaced. ONE progressively lower. O and N very close at top. Plate.

This die is new and has been designated as reverse J.

A. D. Hoch

#### A NEW WASHINGTON "COLONIAL" VARIETY

Electrotypes of the Washington "Colonial" pieces are very common, and on many of the types the obvious give-away to the phony pieces is that they have plain edges, while many of the original coins have lettered edges. While at the MANA convention in Washington in October, I spied an apparent electro of the undated Liberty and Security 1D of Washington (Baker 30). I asked the dealer to remove it from the case to let me examine it. To my amazement, the piece turned out to be as good as gold—it "rang" like a bell when hit with another coin. To say the least, I had no hesitation in paying his price for the coin. It all goes to prove that there are still undiscovered rarities of Washington around. At present this is the only reported specimen of the undated 1D with a plain edge. Undoubtedly there are additional specimens of the 4 star North Wales 1/2D, or the Grate cent with the milling from right to left rather than from left to right. (One of the latter was turned up just recently), lying in boxes waiting to be found. I guess the old adage still applies—it pays to keep your eyes open.

George J. Fuld





Baker 33



Baker 24



Baker 288

